

The Hillandale News

MAR 25 1977

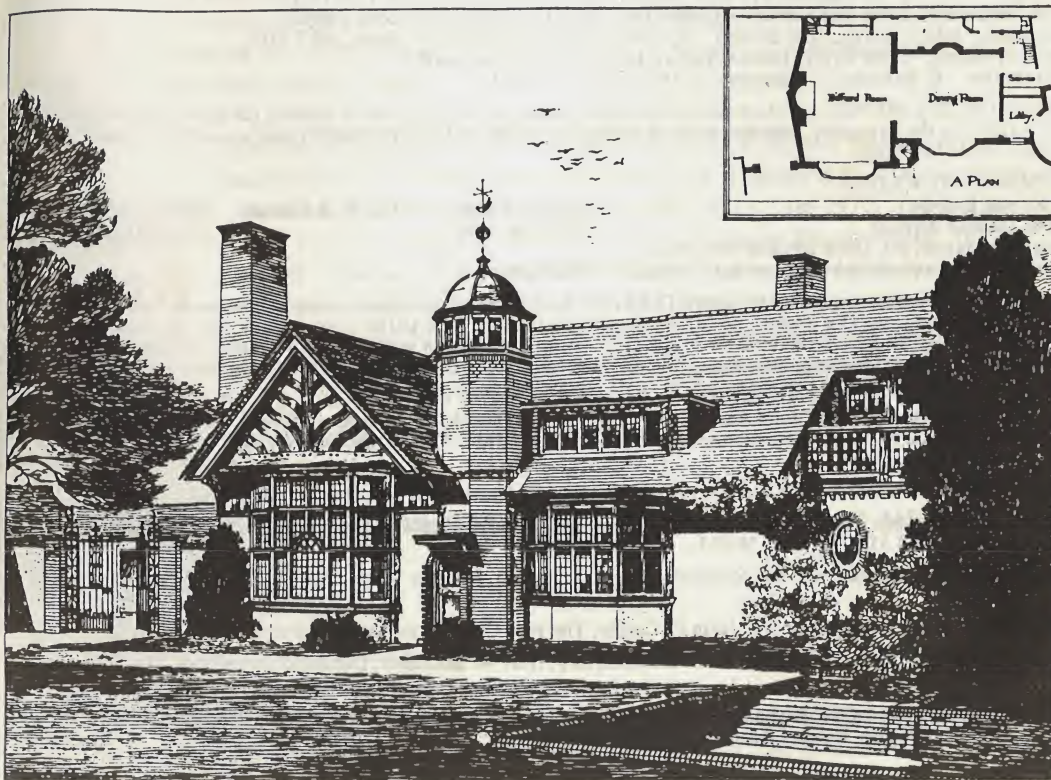
The official journal of the

The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

inaugurated 1919

No. 94

FEBRUARY 1977



Architect's drawing of 'Little Menlo', as seen from the front, or garden side. The date has not been ascertained.

SOCIETY RULES

1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY, and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its members, as well as the scientific and musical study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application.
2. The Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meetings Secretary, who shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting in October, and who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee, similarly elected at each Annual General Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be the carrying into effect of these rules and objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary one clear month before an Annual General Meeting of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nomination of any existing member, at any meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription to be approved at the Annual General Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a statement of Accounts of the Society to an Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the financial year ending October for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

President: George Frow, [REDACTED] Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3SH.

Vice-Presidents: James F. Dennis, R.C.S., [REDACTED] Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 1TW.

A.D. Besford, [REDACTED] Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Chairman: Christopher Proudfoot, [REDACTED] Meopham, Gravesend, Kent.

Vice-Chairman: Goodwin Ive, [REDACTED] Chipstead, Surrey, CR3 3SD.

Hon. Treasurer: B.A. Williamson, [REDACTED] Liverpool, L16 1LA.

Hon. Secretary: John McKeown, [REDACTED] St. James's, London, SW1Y 6PZ.

Archivist: John Carreck, [REDACTED] Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5DX.

Hon. Members: Ernie Bayly, Dennis Harbur, George Frow, Len Watts.

Committee: B. Raynaud, F. Andrews, J. McKeown, Len Watts.

TREASURER'S NOTES: In future, would members please send all monies in Sterling (cheques, Postal Orders, etc.) direct to the Treasurer, *together with all orders for goods*, as this will simplify our accounting system, and avoid double handling.

MEMBERSHIP RATES:

U.K. and Europe	£3.00 per year	U.S.A. & Canada	\$6.00 Surface Mail
New Zealand Airmail	£4.00 per year		\$8.00 Airmail
Australis, Japan, etc. (now payable directly to the Treasurer, as bulk subscription has ceased). £4.00 per year			

Overseas members are requested to send **STERLING DRAFTS** or banknotes, as check clearances here carry a high commission rate. The Society no longer operates within the Post Office Giro system. New Zealand and Australian Postal Orders are acceptable in the U.K. To save postage in mailing receipts, these are sent out with the goods or next magazine to members. **PLEASE MAKE OUT ALL CHECKS AND DRAFTS PAYABLE TO "THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY"**.

MEETINGS are held at the "John Snow" Public House, Broadwick Street, Soho, London, W.1, on the first **MONDAY** of every month commencing at 7.00 p.m. In addition, regular meetings are held at the following centres:

HEREFORD. Details from the Secretary, D.G. Watson, [REDACTED], Tupsley, Hereford.

MIDLANDS. Details from the Secretary, P. Bennett, [REDACTED] Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, Staffs, WV4 5DE. Phone: [REDACTED]

MANCHESTER. Details from the Secretary, Clive Thompson, [REDACTED], Mosley Common, Worsley, Lancs.

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA. Details from C. Gracie, [REDACTED] Cavendish, Victoria 3408, Australia.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND. Details from the Secretary, Herr W. Schenker, [REDACTED], Zurich, Switzerland.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE that all money should now be sent to our Treasurer, B.A. Williamson, [REDACTED] Liverpool, L16 1LA.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

It is New Year's Day as I write, the first day of the Centenary Year of the invention of the phonograph. I suppose that Frenchmen think we are celebrating Charles Cros' postulated design for a sound recording and reproducing machine, while Americans are in no doubt that Edison was the man. Perhaps we English should be grateful for the fact the same centenary year applies in either case and can vary our adulations according to our audience. In the case of a mixed audience, we are rejoicing in 100 years of recorded sound, and what does it matter who invented it anyway?

Seriously, though, we shall be doing quite a lot of celebrating this year, and I have broken off compiling a booklet to accompany the Society's London exhibition in order to write this. The prospect of all this typing prompted me to devise a stand for the typewriter (a Royal of about 1930) that would be solid and yet compact enough to bring within reach of the heat from the fire. A small cabinet gramophone would be ideal, except that there is no room for one's legs. Then I remembered that down in the garden shed, underneath a pile of decrepit gramophones and a bird's nest of old piano wire was a Singer sewing machine treadle of around 1880. Fitted with a mahogany counter-flap for a top, this makes a perfect typing desk, and I feel just like those young men in the pictures of early Graphophones, treadling away as they transcribe the boss's letters from waxed cardboard cylinders on to a Remington typewriter whose platen had to be lifted up on a hinge if you wanted to see what you had typed.

Following my plea for information on 1977 plans, I received two letters from members on this topic. John Stannard told me about his gramophone displays at rallies in Norfolk and Suffolk, and in particular an exhibition at the Worstead Festival on July 29th - 31st 1977. From America, T.C. Fabrizio wrote to say that his company, 'Musique', has produced an 88-note piano roll of the song of Mr. Phonograph. The tune is described as 'A Winner', and the words are printed on the roll. The cost is \$6.95 post paid in America, and any U.K. members who would like to buy one of these rolls should write to me first, as it may be possible to negotiate a reduced price for a large order. If you are not familiar with the Song of Mr. Phonograph, it is printed (words and music) in 'From Tinfoil to Stereo', which is now in print again and can be ordered through member Ernie Bayly, [REDACTED] Bournemouth, BH6 4JA.

COLONEL GEORGE GOURAUD AT HOME AT 'LITTLE MENLO'

INTRODUCTION

In prefacing the second of three features on the life and times of Colonel Gouraud, it should be mentioned that this article and the one in the last issue of this magazine by the type-writing governess in the Gouraud household have been obtained through the vigilance of our Chairman, who also provided the photographic prints. The third and last of the series on this

extrovert ex-United States Cavalry Colonel will deal with his sponsorship of the 'Gouraudphone' in Great Britain, and is an original and scholarly research carried out recently.



A domestic scene with Colonel Gouraud demonstrating the Edison Phonograph as a bedside amanuensis. There is an electric bedside lamp on the battery box.

Many students of recorded sound, particularly on gramophone records, have not always turned the pages further back than the Edwardian period for the voices of great characters in our history, the men of letters, the explorers, the entertainers, the politicians, but Gouraud was making cylinders of prominent figures of his day, many of whom were personal friends, from 1888 onwards, and as remarked in the last issue, a lot of these recordings are now accounted for. Perhaps this mixing with people in high places led to a dream of power coming true in a somewhat Gilbertian manner in the early 1900s, when he partnered a Frenchman in setting up an 'empire' in the Sahara, of which Gouraud became Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, but unfortunately the bubble burst and he settled down to live on a rather quieter scale in Brighton. He died in Switzerland in 1912.

One or two of the accompanying photographs have appeared in earlier HILLANDALE NEWS, especially in Issue 44 and others of that time, but such a clear copy of the music room scene in the

house has never come to our notice; again most of these photographs are thought to have been made by C.R.C. Steytler.



Colonel Gouraud keeping fit at 'Little Menlo'. The Gentleman in the top hat has not been identified, but resembles the one standing behind the piano in the recording scene.

Despite reference to 'Little Menlo's seventeenth-century bay-windows', it was no ancient pile, as the architect's drawing shows, and Frank Andrews has established that Colonel Gouraud was living at 'Brinswood', Beulah Hill in 1880, and by 1887 was living at 'Little Menlo', Beulah Hill, and presumably this was the same mansion re-named in Edison's honour.

Personal matters have not given time to establish several small points with the Croydon Library authorities, but the article stands by itself as an historic document, and such small points can be verified another time. It originally appeared in *The World* dated October 17th, 1888, exactly four months after Edison's 'perfection' of the phonograph, and shows how quickly and hard Gouraud worked to publicise the Edison Phonograph and allied apparatus in Great Britain at that time.

The original article was grossly over-punctuated, and it has been cleared of a great deal, although still reading badly, but it was thought better not to tamper too much with its peculiar

style. It has also been annotated to clarify points for our overseas Members in particular.

George Frow.



Colonel Gouraud (left) with members of his family and friends at 'Little Menlo'. The personnel have not been identified, except Charles Cox stated that the boy on the balcony is Powers Gouraud, and the pianist is probably the governess M.H.F.

It is certainly a curious coincidence that the son of Professor Francis Fauvel-Gouraud of Niagara Falls, who received from his old friend Daguerre the first rude apparatus for the production of sun-pictures sent to America, should have listened on the summit of Beulah Hill some forty years later to the first sounds of the human voice transmitted across the Atlantic. Modern London has long since forgotten the once-popular suburban health-resort where Thackeray⁽¹⁾ made Lady de Sudley organise her famous fete on behalf of the "British Washerwoman's Orphans' Home", and Alfred Wigan,⁽²⁾ in plumed hat and green velvet tunic, scored first humble success as a troubador. The drinkers of saline waters have forsaken Beulah Spa for Schwalbach; Henry Mayhew's 'Wandering Minstrel', in which Robson⁽³⁾ took the town by storm with 'Villikins and his Dinah' is quite as much a thing of the past as Decimus Burton's⁽⁴⁾ arcades, terraces, tea-gardens, lovers' walks and pump room, the very site of which is a matter of dispute and conjecture. Beulah Spa, with its gabled lodge, "in the best taste of ornate rusticity" and its "urn-shaped bucket with a cross handle of silver," has vanished for ever; and it is amid the picturesque woods which surround the deserted spring that Colonel George Gouraud, having converted his trusty sword into a metaphorical pruning-hook, has founded an ideal English home for American invention, where everything is done by electricity, from boot-brushing to horse-grooming. In its pre-Crystal Palace era, Norwood was chiefly known as a sylvan stronghold of the gipsies; but the day is not far distant when 'Little Menlo' will attain a reputation quite as world-wide as that enjoyed by its prototype in New Jersey, three thousand miles away, where Thomas Edison, the "Wizard of Menlo Park" has perfected so many of his marvellous discoveries. "Friend Gouraud" has proved himself to be as able an ambassador of science as his indefatigable partner and fellow-worker could possibly desire. The telephone, the electric light, and the phonograph began in turn their practical existence in this country on Beulah Hill, and, as improvement succeeded improvement with bewildering rapidity, "Little Menlo" has gradually been converted from a rural cottage into a roomy house capacious enough to welcome the crowds of scientific visitors who enjoy the lavish hospitality of George Gouraud and his kindly wife, while witnessing the latest achievements of Thomas Edison.

On the crest of Beulah Hill, midway between the Crystal Palace and Streatham Common you come somewhat abruptly on an archway of moulded red terra-cotta.⁽⁵⁾ The letter 'G' is interwoven with a sabre, a pen, and flashes of lightning, on a shield in the centre of the pediment, and through the gate of **hammered** ironwork you catch a glimpse of a view of surpassing beauty. The well-shrubbed flower-garden slopes gradually down to the pleasantest valley in Surrey; the spires of a score of village churches glisten in the sunshine; the grand stand at Epsom⁽⁶⁾ seems almost to be within walking distance; on a clear day Banstead Downs to the South and Windsor and Simbledon to the west are distinctly visible; the prospect is bounded only by the chalk cliffs of Dorking and Reigate. A grey-bearded veteran in the fatigue dress of the United States Cavalry comes across the gravelled courtyard with martial gait to welcome you, and the abundance of corps badges on his breast tells the story of the fifty-seven general engagements in which John Flynn took part while fighting for the North, quite as clearly as his accent betokens his Hibernian origin. George Gouraud has been in a great measure his own architect, and "Little Menlo"

can claim at any rate the merit of originality. The rough-cast walls are intersected by means of chocolate-coloured timber; the chimney stacks end in castellated Doulton ware; an open gallery runs above the porch of wood and cathedral glass; a Jacobean turret provides a separate entrance for the European annex of Edison's laboratory; the seventeenth-century bay-windows are filled with leaded panes. Law, music, and theology are, appropriately enough, the near neighbours of science at Upper Norwood. The abodes of Mr. Theodore Aston, the electrical Queen's Counsel,⁽⁷⁾ and Mr. Sims Reeves,⁽⁸⁾ are just hidden from view, but as you stand on the doorstep of "Little Menlo", the towers of Westwood, where Mr. Spurgeon lives,⁽⁹⁾ peep out above the tops of the beeches. In the open door stands a man of unmistakably soldier-like aspect, wearing a white wideawake, a Norfolk jacket, tweed knickerbockers and thick homespun stockings, who reproaches you gently for not having announced your arrival beforehand. The usual railway service is manifestly insufficient for the requirements of the energetic partner of Thomas Edison. If he had only known of your visit, Telephone and Phonograph, the fastest-going tandem in England would have brought you from Herne Hill in less than half the time it took the train to reach the (Crystal Palace) High Level station.⁽¹⁰⁾ The low hall is full of old oak and painted glass. Colonel Gouraud explains to you that one of the objects of his autumnal tours is the collection of antique English furniture, but Japanese bamboo and bead screens hang in the windows, while a couple of telephones keep "Little Menlo" in constant communication with the City (of London) and Croydon, and the miniature American flag stuck in the phonograph near the door tells your host that a visitor has called during his absence and left a message. He touches a spring, and from a funnel-like tube the familiar voice of Mr. Spurgeon expresses regret at finding Colonel Gouraud out, and promises to call on the following afternoon. A thick damask curtain divides the hall from a small octagonal boudoir, where the delicate draperies of yellow satin, pale green silk and lace are in artistic harmony with a series of outline sepia drawings hung between a frieze and a dado of palm leaves. It has nothing whatever in common with the cosy dining-room on which it opens, where oak logs, burning in the Dutch fireplace of plain arched brickwork cast a cheerful reflection on the floor of polished pitch-pine and light up the tapestry panels with which the mistress of the house has decorated the walls. The ceiling is low and crossed by heavy rafters; an inlaid tulip-wood press faces a screen which evidently leads to a larger apartment; a cushioned settle almost entirely fills the deep bay-window, and the Duke of Wellington and George Washington, gazing placidly at each other guard the veiled entrance to the hall of science. In a dimly lighted corner you detect the presence of a small silver pump, and Colonel Gouraud tells you laughingly that he can vary his champagne at will by a draught of the far-famed medicinal waters which cured the ailments of our ancestors, for in digging the foundations for his Dutch chimney he came upon a vaulted spring which he has carefully preserved and put in direct communication with his dinner-table.

The living-room at "Little Menlo" is dedicated impartially to science, war and music. Its coffered roof is just twice as high as the ceiling of the dining-room, which forms its ante-chamber; a bust of Socrates over the great recessed window which commands a full view of the Surrey hills, directly faces Mr. Tinworth's head of Edison, occupying a post of special honour in the centre of the Minstrels' Gallery, where Mrs. Gouraud paints, and many of the musical records

sent to America are created, and where her husband shows you the faded photographs of Fort Sumter taken twenty-seven years ago, when he served in his youth as General Gilmour's aide-de-camp. Just over them he has placed the portraits of Washington, Grant and Lincoln; you will readily pardon him if he has found a vent for his feelings by turning the head of that most stubborn Southerner, Jefferson Davis, upside down as it hangs between the engravings of Robert Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson. Close to his wife's easel is an unfinished head of General Sheridan, upon which Colonel Gouraud works assiduously in his leisure moments - for he is as nearly as expert a modeller as he is a tandem-driver. If there is one thing on earth which can induce him to forget for a single moment the interests of "Friend Edison", it is the trophies which carry him back to the days when Abraham Lincoln, barely three weeks before he was assassinated, signed his commission as brevet major for "gallant conduct in the field in the engagement at Honey Hill, South Carolina." His war-stained arms and accoutrements, together with the ears of the charger he rode at Ball's Bluff form a trophy, which encircles a portrait with the autograph "P. H. Sheridan, Lieutenant-General commanding the Army", placed above another Dutch hearth, where more logs blaze fiercely on two colossal fighting-cocks rampant, in hammered iron. The battered bugle of the First Squadron and a well-worn sword belt flank the pistols which Colonel Gouraud found in the plantation of the notorious duellist Major Ball Warning, near Savannah; a great part of the terra-cotta wall on either side is covered by graphic sketches of incidents in the War of Secession, made by a private soldier. As you look at a characteristic pen-and-ink sketch of Abraham Lincoln, Colonel Gouraud tells you how the patriotic President stood on the steps of the White House, with one arm leaning on his shoulder, as the Van Allen Cavalry defiled slowly past on its way to reinforce Ambrose Burnside (11) at Newberne, after the first campaign of the Shenandoah. Colonel Gouraud has preserved with pardonable pride, his old commissions and the various general orders of which he was the subject. He has a dozen good stories at least, to relate of his military adventures; and they will not be the less interesting because he has come to use a dragoon's sword as a poker, has pointed a steel scabbard with a shovel, and has attached a hearth-brush to the end of a genuine Toledo blade. A great deal remains to be seen before you can draw up one of the many Indian bamboo chairs with sage-green cushions, which abound at "Little Menlo" to the fender of half-round white enamel bricks, and listen to your host's experiences. He means to emblazon on oak shields round the cornice of the Hall of Science the corps badges of 1865, and trusts before long that a European Commander of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States will meet under its roof, to celebrate the birthdays of Grant and Sheridan. On one of the two grand pianos rests a water-colour sketch of the valley of the Tiber, bequeathed to him by his friend Mr. Bayard Taylor, but the remarkable photograph close to it, with the brief but suggestive inscription, "The Phonograph finished 3am 15th June 1888, Edison's Laboratory, 25½ hours sleep in 7 days" (12) at once rivets your attention in the diminutive instrument which in the space of three months has contrived to make the present renown of "Little Menlo" eclipse the past glories of Beulah Spa.

The Napoleonic face of Thomas Edison, as you see him in another photograph listening to the voice of "Friend Gouraud" when he unpacked the first record which reached him, creates a lasting impression on your mind. Some half-dozen instruments are scattered about the great room, but your host prefers to show you his newest wonder in the quietude of his 'snuggery' overlooking

the al fresco gallery, which he uses while dictating letters to a stenographer who reproduces them by type-writing, or when going through his daily modicum of exercise with the Indian club. It is here that he carefully keeps his father's "Practical Phonography", "Phreno-Mnemotechnic Dictionary" and other works, on the serviceable walnut-wood field-desk he once used when Inspector-General of the Department of the South. He has little need of the metal candlesticks formed out of hand-grenades from Fort Sumter, for he gets abundant light from the electric battery, which at the same time works his own particular phonograph. A wire enables him to place his friends, by the aid of the loud-speaking electro-motograph receiver, in immediate connection with the concert-room at the Crystal Palace – but he has a much greater surprise in store for you. His able assistant, Mr. Hamilton, brings in an invisible record and in a few seconds you are listening wonder-struck to the music of an entire orchestra which played only ten days previously in the presence of Edison's phonograph in New York, and now re-echoes through the rooms of "Little Menlo". George Gouraud has travelled all over the world since the eventful day when, to use his own words, he discovered "the diamond-mine of Thomas Edison's genius in an obscure village of New Jersey, before that shining light acquired its incandescence since reflected upon a universe". He is today an equal partner with Edison in most of his principal European inventions, and owns with him the phonographic rights for the whole world except the United States and Canada. When the exigencies of business caused his sojourn in England to be indefinitely prolonged, he pitched his tent on Beulah Hill, resolved to send his sons to Harrow and settled down quietly to the full enjoyment of English life. He is an adept in every kind of outdoor exercise, and he loves even more than his tandem to welcome to his Surrey home his old companions in arms, with whom he delights to indulge in reminiscences of the time when he met Sherman at the Ogeechee River after his great march through Georgia to the sea.

The major-generals on half-pay and other householders of Upper Norwood are not as a rule, superstitious, but they plead guilty to a wholesome dread of the megaphone, or universal eavesdropper, the advent of which is hourly expected. (13) The marvels of "Little Menlo" have caused you to unduly prolong your stay among the phonographs, and Colonel Gouraud insists on taking you homewards in his dog-cart as far as Westminster Bridge. The prize tandem is brought round to the door, and as you emerge from the Doulton archway, the head of the leader and the wheels of the vehicle are suddenly illuminated by electricity through the instrumentality of the "Schlangschief" battery. As you drive rapidly through the sober streets of Dulwich the unlooked-for apparition causes more terror to the startled cabmen than even the terrible megaphone is likely to produce among the retired warriors of Beulah Hill.

NOTES:

1. W. M. Thackeray (1811-63), a British novelist of considerable output; known chiefly for *Vanity Fair* and *The Newcomes*.
2. Wigan later became a celebrated actor-manager with Farren, at the Olympic Theatre in London's Aldwych.
3. Frederick Robson – *The Great Little Robson* – first sung "Villikins and his Dinah" in 1844, later taken up by Sam Cowell and J. L. Toole. However George Augustus Sala,

the eminent Victorian journalist, claimed the song was possibly older than the Elizabethan period. This song was an example of the habit of the London lower classes, as depicted by Dickens, of reversing the pronunciation of the letters 'v' and 'w', hence 'Villikins' for 'Wilkins' and 'werry' for 'very'.

4. Decimus Burton (1800–81), architect and leading figure in the Classical Revival.
5. The terra cotta archway, according to a demolition worker approached when the house was being pulled down in the mid-1960s, was to be carefully taken apart and shipped to America, and we would again ask if any Members in America know where it was re-erected.
6. Epsom race-course was and is where "The Derby" is run every year.
7. A Queen's (or King's) Counsel is a senior barrister.
8. Sims Reeves (1818–1900) was a leading British tenor who after an early operatic career took to oratorio in 1848, and appeared frequently at the Crystal Palace.
9. Charles H. Spurgeon (1834–92) was a famous Victorian divine and Calvinistic preacher.
10. The High Level Station, designed by Edward Barry for the London, Chatham and Dover Railway was built on a grand scale to serve the nearby Crystal Palace, but was pulled down after closure and removal of the line in 1954.
11. Burnside (1824–81) gave his name to the American language in and because of a peculiar fashion. He clean-shaved his chin and lower cheeks below the line of the mouth and allowed his hair to grow down the upper cheeks to meet across the top lip; the resulting whiskers were nicknamed 'side-burns' by his men.
12. Several references give the date as 16th June.
13. This seems to be a very early reference to Edison's Aerophone, (illustrated in Dickson's 1894 book on Edison, p. 119) the principle of which was included in Edison's British Patent No. 2909 of 1877. It is difficult to understand the antithetic use of the terms 'megaphone' and 'eavesdropper' here.

LONG-PLAY CYLINDER RECORDS!!

by Sydney H. Carter.

The 4 Minute Edison Amberol cylinder has 200 t.p.i. and approximately 6.8 inches of sound track per revolution.

At 160 r.p.m. this provides about 18 inches of recorded sound per second.

Applying this to an Amberol 5 inch cylinder, which has approximately 17 inches of sound track per revolution, the speed can be reduced to 65 r.p.m. to provide approximately the same quality of reproduction.

This gives a playing time per 5 inch cylinder of 10 to 12 minutes, sufficient for the playing of many overtures, complete movements of favourite symphonies, concertos, etc. with of course consistent quality of reproduction from the beginning to the end, which only the phonograph

can provide. As a comparison with a 12 inch modern L.P., we get 20 inches of play per second at the start, gradually reducing to 9 inches per second as we approach the end of the recording, hence the deterioration in quality.

Just think what a 12 minute record would have meant to the popularity of the phonograph at a time (1909) when the maximum playing time of ANY disc record was no more than 4 minutes!

How curious that it was never thought of!!

GIGLI'S ACOUSTIC LEGACY
PART II
by John Stannard

In this second and final part of Beniamino Gigli's acoustic legacy we come to the gramophone records he made in New York. Whether these are better technically than the Milan recordings I have yet to discover. One thing for sure is that Gigli's singing in all these acoustic recordings is exceptionally fine. He doesn't use the 'voice break' so much, which a number of opera goers did not particularly care for.

The recording level and sound quality of the records is good. At that period in time Gigli could not see much sense of His Master's Voice putting him in juxtaposition with Caruso; but after Caruso's death in 1921 Gigli's records quickly gained popularity. Always he was haunted with that name "Caruso". Press write ups would declare his opera performances: "The best ever -- since Caruso." "Highly polished and well sung -- unsurpassed, except possibly, by Caruso." And so on.

Caruso! Caruso! If only the public would accept him as Gigli. He did not want comparisons -- just acceptance. Well he did get his acceptance, and became much loved by all opera fans and gramophone record collectors alike. He adored the way New Yorkers called him "Mr. Giggly".

Beniamino Gigli sang for the last time in a farewell concert in Washington, May 25th 1955. He had been singing on the stage and entertaining audiences for 41 years. As I have mentioned Gigli acoustic records are rare, but well worth scouring the antique and second-hand shops for. They have become so because Gigli have re-recorded most, if not all, of his songs and arias via the microphone when electric recording took over.

All the following acoustic records were made in New York:--

DATE.	TITLE.	H.M.V. (catalogue)	MATRIX
January 1921	Dai Campi, Dai Prati (Mefistofele)	SS 7-52170 (D/S DA222)	B 24782
January 1921	Recondita armonia (La Tosca)	SS 7-52176 (D/S DA221)	B 24919
February 1921	Giunto sul passo estremo (Mefistofele)	SS 7-52200 (D/S DA222)	B 24783

DATE	TITLE	H.M.V. (catalogue)	MATRIX
February 1921	E Lucevan le stelle (La Tosca)	SS 7-52180 (D/S DA223)	B 24920
February 1921	Cielo e mar (La Gioconda)	SS 7-52171 (D/S DA220)	B 24922
March 1921	Spirto gentil (La Favorita)	SS 2-052197 (D/S DB273)	C 24921
March 1921	Salve dimora casta e pura (Faust)	SS 2-052214 (D/S DB273)	C 25109
March 1921	Apri la tua finestra (Iris)	SS 7-52198 (D/S DA221)	B 25110
April 1921	Tu sola	SS 7-52201 (D/S DA224)	B 25141
April 1921	Santa lucia luntana	SS 7-52195 (D/S DA572)	B 25017
March 1922	Notturmo d'amore	SS 2-052219 (D/S DB670)	C 36061
March 1922	Vainement ma bien aimee	SS 7-32073 (D/S DA556)	B 26191
March 1922	Vesti La giubba (I Pagliacci)	SS 7-52219 (D/S DA220)	B 26192
September 1922	Serenata	SS 7-52220 (D/S DA572)	B 26795
October 1922	Come un bel di Maggio (Andrea Chenier)	SS 7-52222 (D/S DA556)	B 27009
October 1922	O dolci mani (La Tosca)	SS 7-52223 (D/S DA586)	B 27010
October 1922	Un di all'azzurro spazio (Andrea Chenier)	SS 2-052233 (D/S DB670)	C 27011
February 1923	O paradiso (L'Africana)	SS 2-052235 (D/S DB109)	C 27531
February 1923	Ah, levetoi soleil (Romeo et Juliette)	Unpublished	C 27532
February 1923	Nel verde Maggio (Loreley)	SS 7-52257 (D/S DA586)	B 27533
* March 1923	Ange adorable (Romeo et Juliette)	SS 2-034033	C 27714
* March 1923	Ah, nefuis pas encore (Romeo et Juliette)	SS 7-34006 (D/S DA381)	B 27715

* with Lucrezia Bori—Soprano.

DATE	TITLE	H.M.V. (catalogue)	MATRIX
June 1923	M'appari tutto amor (Marta)	SS 2-052244 (D/S DB109)	C 27995
November 1924	Funiculi funicula	SS 7-52286 (D/S DA713)	B 31457
November 1924	Povero pulcinella	SS 7-52287 (D/S DA713)	B 31477

SS = Single Side. D/S = Double Side.

THE AIR-PRESSURE OPERATED AMPLIFYING GRAMOPHONE by Sydney H. Carter

From quite early days in the history of the Phonograph and Gramophone, Thomas A. Edison and others had devoted their inventive skill into a means of amplifying the reproduction of cylinder and disc records for use in Assembly Rooms, large Halls, etc. In Edison's British Patent No. 2909 of 30th July 1877, (some months before the Phonograph Patent) he had envisaged "escaping air acting with great power upon a local diaphragm" to create loudness and had applied this to his Aerophone, a sort of loud-hailing megaphone of its time, but it does not seem to have been followed up after 1888.

THE AUXETOPHONE

Its first connection with the gramophone seems to have been made by Horace Short in the United Kingdom in 1898, after earlier experiments in Mexico, and this was financed by Col. G. E. Gouraud, to become The Gouraudphone; in due course Gouraud withdrew and Horace Short went on to aeronautical matters.

Independently Sir Charles Parsons had applied for a Patent in 1903 for a compressed air gramophone, and in 1904 Short assigned his own early patent to Parsons, who in due course sold his gramophone rights to The Gramophone & Typewriter Company (HMV) in early 1905.*

Demonstrations of the AUTEXOPHONE were given in front of a full house at the Royal Albert Hall in December 1906 and on other occasions, including a great demonstration at the Crystal Palace on May 12th 1911, where it received much publicity. The volume of reproduction was undoubtedly very great indeed, although I am sure it would hardly have satisfied a present-day audience!

The Victor Talking Machine Co. of Camden, New Jersey, U.S.A. took over the rights and marketed the AUTEXOPHONE in high class mahogany and oak cabinets.

The equipment was capable of great volume from gramophone records for use at Show-grounds, Open-air public gatherings, etc., and had a limited sale. The outbreak of the Great War effectively prevented any further exploitation, as all energies were directed to munitions, etc., and to the best of my knowledge manufacture was never resumed.

(* ---The story of the Gouraudphone and Autexophone in great detail will be published in forthcoming issues of HILLDALE NEWS--- Ed.).

THE STENTORPHONE

Working independently, the London engineer, Harry A. Gaydon, had also been carrying out research on the same general lines, and between 1910 and 1914 designed and prepared a few air-pressure amplifying gramophones, which were used at Showgrounds, etc.

Except for special Military purposes, there was little progress during the war years, but in 1919 Mr. Gaydon further improved his designs and secured Patents Rights. These he offered to Creed & Co. Ltd., the Telegraph Engineers of Croydon, Surrey, who purchased the Patents and developed the equipment commercially as the STENTORPHONE.

This provided an excellent means of securing a large volume of recorded music and speech from disc records, for use at Dance Halls, Open-air meetings, etc.

Models in attractive Jacobean oak cabinets were prepared and the photo shows one of the heavily built models for use in Assembly Halls, etc. It weighs 160 lbs and the price was £85.

The unusual model with 5 Horns was designed for use in Arenas, etc., where a very wide spread of sound was required.

Unfortunately, the Stentorphone was introduced on to the market rather too late,

for the advent of Radio Broadcasting in November, 1922, followed by the development within a short time of the electro-magnetic pickup, valve amplifier and moving coil loudspeaker quickly killed the demand, and production was discontinued.

The Autexophone and Stentorphone have now passed into Gramophone history, but will long be remembered as a remarkably clever and interesting invention of its time.

DESIGN AND OPERATION

The basic principle of the Autexophone and Stentorphone sound amplifying gramophone is a specially designed sound box, taking 6 cubic feet of free air per minute, compressed to 10 lbs.

In place of the usual diaphragm, a small valve is employed which is operated by the record direct through the medium of the usual steel needle. The valve is made from a non-corrosive metal alloy, and in appearance resembles a miniature grid iron. This vibrates to and from a slotted valve seating, the slots of which are exactly covered by the bars of the valve.

The compressed air passing through the valve seating presses the valve away sufficiently to permit it to escape in a steady stream, but when the valve is vibrated by the sound waves on the



Harry A. Gaydon, A.M.I.A.E., A.F.



5—HORN EXPERIMENTAL STENTORPHONE

where the music starts and the number of turns before this is reached, thus assuring that the air control is opened at the exact moment the needle arrives at the music.

I much appreciate the valuable assistance I have received in this research from John Rackham of I.T.T. Creed Ltd. Hollingbury, also in letters from two retired members of their staff, Arthur J. Buckland and Harold J. Woodman, who were both closely connected with the construction and marketing of the STENTORPHONE.

Arthur Buckland was Mr. Gaydon's chief assistant at the Cherry Orchard Road Works, and

record the flow of air is interrupted and musical sounds result. Owing to the sudden expansion of the air after passing the valve, magnification takes place. The valve can be taken out, cleaned and replaced in half a minute, without the need of special tools. The compressed air is supplied by a small compact power unit consisting of a $\frac{1}{2}$ h.p. electric motor, a patent rotary compressor, an air reservoir and the necessary electrical and other fittings, all mounted on a very substantial wood base, part of which acts as an air filter.

The power unit is kept as far away from the instrument as possible, and connected by means of a small hose-pipe, which conveys the compressed air.

On the instrument itself, there is another patented device which controls the flow of air to the sound box in such a manner that air is either passed through the box or allowed to escape through an adjustable silencer which forms part of this fitment.

When no air is passing through the box, no sound whatever is produced that can be heard more than three feet away. This is useful in many ways, but principally as a means of cutting out the sound of scratch that is so objectionable on the first few turns of the record before the music commences.

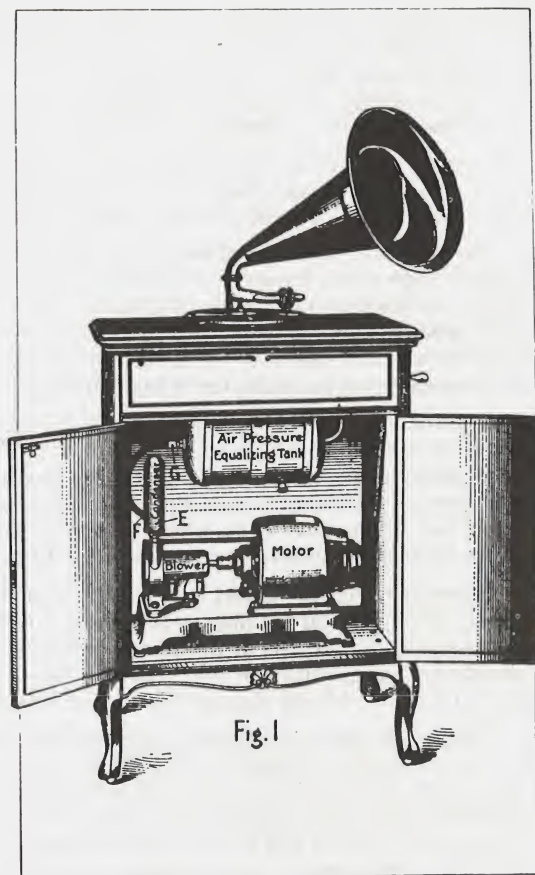
Records can be easily marked to show

kindly provides the following information.

"The sound box which carried the needle, had an opening of about 1" dia. which was plugged into a tubular tone arm which increased in diameter until it mated into a kind of universal joint elbow of about 2" internal diameter. A large brass horn about 5-6 ft. in length with a 24-30 inch flare was attached to the other end of the elbow outlet. The released compressed air produced sound vibrations which travelled via the tone arm out through the horn. The body of the sound box was a brass casting and this together with the aluminium tone arm and also a 3/8" o.d. rubber pipe conveying the air to the sound box combined to give a total weight of about one pound, and the inertia of this mass was considerable. In order to lessen the dead weight on the record an adjustable spring was fitted to the top of the tone arm back to the elbow."

Harold Woodman was on the Sales Staff, and had many interesting experiences. He now writes:

"I can well remember that extreme care was taken in the manufacture of the exponential horns which were made meticulously carefully by Bill Crooks, the chief pattern maker, helped by Harry Tanner. The Stentorphone was often used at local fetes and I believe that some were demonstrated abroad. I myself took one to the U.S.A. and demonstrated it in New York where it created quite a stir. I cannot remember having been able to sell any of them, however, although they were particularly impressive in reproducing some of Sousa's Military Marches.



THE AUTEXOPHONE

SOME HINTS ON SOUNDBOX REPAIRS

by C.P.

I make no pretence to being an expert in the finer points of sound-box tuning, but these notes should be of some assistance to newcomers to gramophone repairs, and will at least show the way to achieving satisfactory results from most soundboxes.

Visual restoration I have touched on in a previous article, and I will merely reiterate that this is best done while the soundbox is in pieces. It is important not to spoil screw-heads by using a poorly shaped screwdriver, particularly as the screws may well be seized in their threads. Cleaning of both

nickel and aluminium is best done, I find, with Solvol. Autosol, a paste-form chrome-cleaner available from most garages and car-accessory shops. Where there is a heavy encrustation of verdigris, a gentle application of Jenolite Rust Remover is advisable, as this will remove the corrosion without being abrasive. Often there is enough nickel left underneath to be polished to a respectable finish, although of course it will never look like new.

The commonest functional malfunction in an old soundbox is some form of rattle, sometimes only apparent at certain frequencies. This can be caused by perished gaskets, damaged diaphragm, loose stylus-bar to diaphragm screw or loose stylus-bar mounting.

Gaskets usually consist of lengths of rubber tubing, one each side of the diaphragm, held in slight compression. Exceptions are the Edison reproducers, which use thin flat rubber washers (often replaced today by cork) and most of the later HMV soundboxes: Nos. 2 and 4 have a solid rubber moulding with a slot to take the diaphragm (fortunately this type seems less prone to hardening with age than the tubular variety), while the various No. 5s have a felt washer, the compliance being provided for in the corrugations round the perimeter of the diaphragm itself.

The Society's spares catalogue includes rubber tubing of suitable diameter for most soundbox gaskets, although it is not available in white. Where, for the sake of originality of appearance, white is required, one possible source is a length of old electrical flex of the large capacity type used with irons and some fires. Often one of the strands is covered in white rubber insulation, and all you have to do is to cut off a length slightly longer than you need, bare the wires at one end, clamp them in a vice and ease off the covering.

Sometimes the rear gasket is serviceable and can be used in front, with a new length of rubber of any colour behind the diaphragm, where it is less obvious. Another source of secondhand white gaskets can be one of those late soundboxes of the Goldring type, where the protective shield covering the front of the diaphragm tends to preserve the gaskets in good condition, and also to hide them from view, so that they can be replaced in any colour.

Whether access to the gaskets is achieved by removing the backplate, as in the Exhibition, by removing a front bezel (as in the Magnet and similar aluminium-bodied types) or by simply pulling out the front gasket, to remove the diaphragm and rear gasket through the front of the soundbox (as in many cheaply-made diecast soundboxes), it is always important to exercise great caution, as the gasket will probably be stuck both to the body, backplate or bezel and the diaphragm as well. Diaphragms are very easily damaged, particularly metal ones, where the slightest degree of buckling can ruin the performance for good.

When re-using an old gasket, wash it in warm water before replacing it in the soundbox: this will not only clean it, but will also soften it slightly. When cutting new gaskets, make sure that they exactly fit the inside of the soundbox: if they are a fraction too large, they will buckle and thus fail to provide an even seating for the diaphragm, and will similarly fail if they are too short. It is customary to place the joint in the front gasket at 6 o'clock so that it is hidden by the stylus bar, while the rear gasket should have its joint at the top.

Mica diaphragms should be free of cracks and delaminations, which are likely to cause rattles or blasting. This apart, the tonal qualities of different micas can vary enormously, and a soundbox which appears to be in good condition but performs poorly may benefit from a change of diaphragm. The joint between the diaphragm and stylus-bar should be tight (but do not damage the mica by overtightening the screw) and a small blob of beeswax should be melted on to it on both sides — unless it is a Seymour soundbox, in which case such treatment would have Henry Seymour turning in his grave, and two tiny paper washers should be used.

Aluminium diaphragms are very easily damaged, and once damaged cannot be satisfactorily

mended. Minor dents or creases can be flattened out with care to make the soundbox work, but it will not sound as well as an undamaged example. With the same proviso, it is even possible to repair a damaged centre, where the stylus-bar has been pushed through the diaphragm, if the hole is not extensive: a washer of aluminium foil is cut just large enough to overlap the hole, and attached with molten wax.

After re-assembling the soundbox, it will need tuning. The EMG and Expert soundboxes were tuned not only by stylus-bar tension, but also by the pressure on the gaskets, and a very limited degree of variable compression is possible with Exhibition and similar soundboxes where the backplate is held on to the body by screws. The optimum degree of tightness has to be found by trial and error. This last is also true when it comes to adjusting the stylus-bar mountings, but there are one or two points to bear in mind first. In those soundboxes such as the Exhibition where the stylus-bar is held in tension by springs against a knife-edge fulcrum, the screws should be tightened alternately until the upper end of the bar just touches the diaphragm (the diaphragm screw being removed for this operation). This ensures that the diaphragm is not pulled out of its mean position. After the screw has been replaced, the soundbox can be tested. If further adjusting is necessary, try to keep the same mean position of the diaphragm.

Most soundboxes developed from 1925 onwards have stylus-bars pivoted between two conical bearings; there is no spring-tension, and adjustment consists of getting just the right amount of friction in the pivots. Many of these boxes have diecast bodies, and the well-known tendency of die-cast pot-metal to expand with age sometimes results in the pivots moving apart so that the stylus-bar is free to rattle. The pivots should be adjusted so that there is a very slight degree of friction; this can be checked by detaching the bar from the diaphragm and swinging it outwards. Usually, the pivots are threaded and mounted in threaded holes in extension-lugs of the soundbox body, held firm by locknuts. On the HMV 4 and 5a/b boxes, the pivot has a plain shank slidably housed in the lug, and locked in place by a locknut on the inside and a mushroom-headed screw on the outer end.

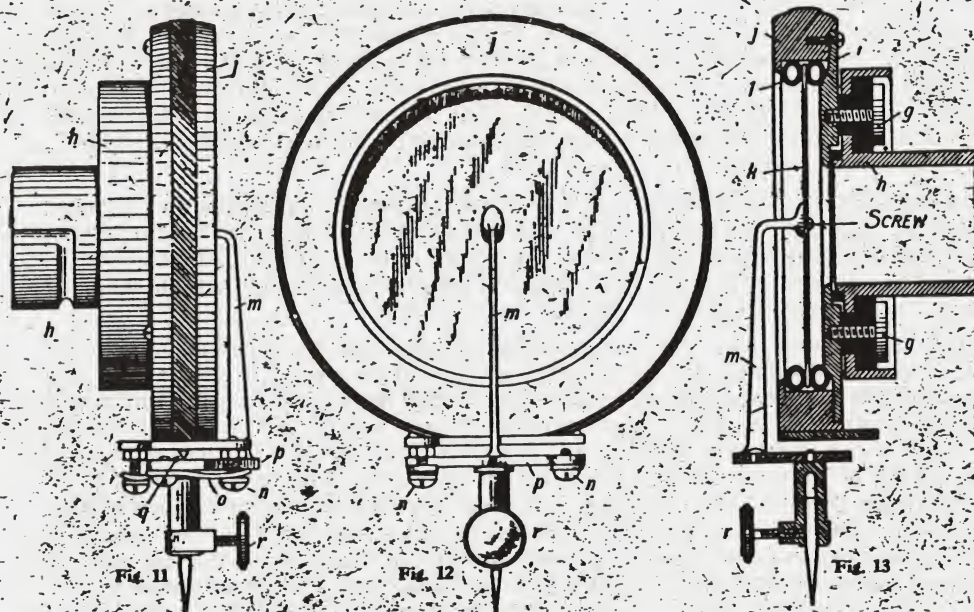
With experience it becomes possible to judge the performance of a soundbox to a considerable extent by passing the ball of your thumb across the end of the stylus-bar, but the ultimate test must always be playing a record, or better still several records of different types. Performance should be compared with that of a box which is known to give good results, on the same records on the same machine and with the same type of needle.

Another problem with many soundboxes, particularly the HMV No. 5s and the late No. 4s, which have diecast backplates, is the swelling and cracking of the metal. This means that it is usually impossible to dismantle these boxes without entirely destroying the back. Fortunately, they do not need to be dismantled as often as earlier designs, but the metal is very often broken away on the boss which fits over the tone-arm. If you are faced with this problem, do not despair, for that rare gift of Twentieth-century science commonly known as Araldite can put all to rights. The rubber sleeve and its inner brass ring provide the necessary location, round which the broken bits of metal are replaced with the adhesive. Any missing bits (there are usually some) are simply replaced with Araldite: a length of Sellotape wound round the boss will hold the bits together while the adhesive sets, and also leave a good smooth surface on the built-up sections. If the locating screw is still present, coat it with a little Vaseline, place it in position and build up the Araldite round it. Otherwise, build in a substitute locating pin, making sure that the projecting inner end is small enough to fit the tone-arm slot beforehand. Filing it down once it is Araldited into the soundbox won't be much fun!

One final tricky problem that can occur is a sheared-off needle-screw. Usually, you have a

hardened-steel stub seized in a brass needle-holder, and trying to get a drill to remove the screw without going off into the brass is almost impossible. Usually, the act of drilling out the screw will tend to unseize it and turn it further into its hole. If it is only projecting a short way into the needle hole, it may then be possible to turn the stub in until it falls out, but more often there is not room for this. It may be possible to unscrew it slightly, if you can get a small bradawl or screwdriver to bite in the sheared and drilled end; once the latter is proud of the surface, it can be gripped with pliers. If the worst comes to the worst, you will probably end up drilling a hole down the side of the screw, which can then be prised out sideways. The large irregular hole remaining can be trimmed up with needle files and then plugged with a piece of carefully-shaped brass glued in with Araldite. When set and trimmed flush, this can be drilled and tapped for a new screw. Of course, all this must be done with the stylus-bar removed from the soundbox, as damage to the diaphragm would otherwise follow as inevitably as night the day. In cases where the stylus-bar-to-diaphragm fitting is permanent, as in the Meltrope, the only way is to take the bar and diaphragm out as a unit, which calls for great care at all stages. On an HMV No. 5 whose back has swollen so as to be irremovable, the stylus-bar will have to be detached from the 'spider' on the diaphragm by melting the solder.

If you don't fancy any of this bother, I can only suggest you set about building up a stock of spare soundboxes of every description!



Key to soundbox illustration

- g : screw holding rubber-insulated back in place.
- h : back mounting (insulated from main body of soundbox).
- i : back-plate (remove for access to gaskets and diaphragm).

- j : main rim or frame of soundbox.
- k : diaphragm.
- l : rubber gasket.
- m : stylus-bar.
- n : stylus-bar tension adjusting-screw.
- o : stylus-bar tension spring
- p : stylus-bar pivot-plate.
- q : Knife-edge fulcrum for stylus-bar.
- r : needle-screw.

(This diagram is of a Columbia 'Regal' soundbox of about 1914).

CECIL A. KIDD

In the October magazine Cecil Kidd - sometimes known as Alec, or 'Captain' Kidd - recounted his diary notes on first joining the Society in 1955; since then I have had a further letter from him delighted that his jottings have given us pleasure.

I am sorry to have to say that on the heels of this letter has come a phone message from Cecil Kidd's daughter to say her father died on January 5th in his eighties. There are a number of members who were in the Society before 1955, when Cecil Kidd joined, but he was an enthusiastic cylinder man to the last who enjoyed exchanging correspondence with others of similar leanings and was always pleased to be asked to contribute something to HILLDALE NEWS. In the Curtain Road days he was rarely absent from meetings and normally gave a well-prepared cylinder programme once a year.

In his last letter he recounts further activities of the Society twenty years ago, and would have been pleased to know that we shall publish some extracts in the next issue as a tribute to a loyal member who did not forget us.

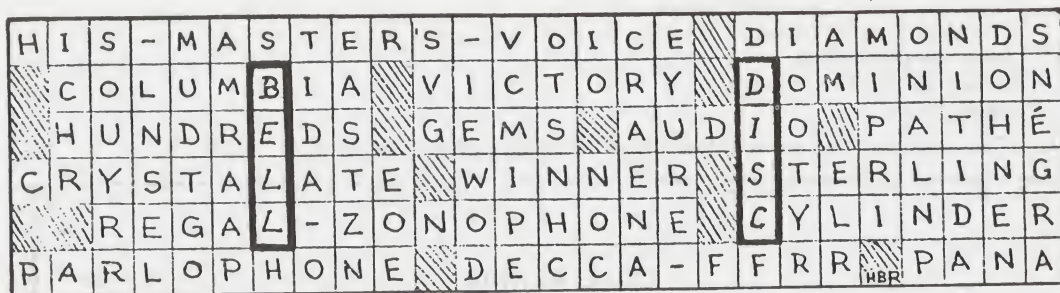
George Frow.



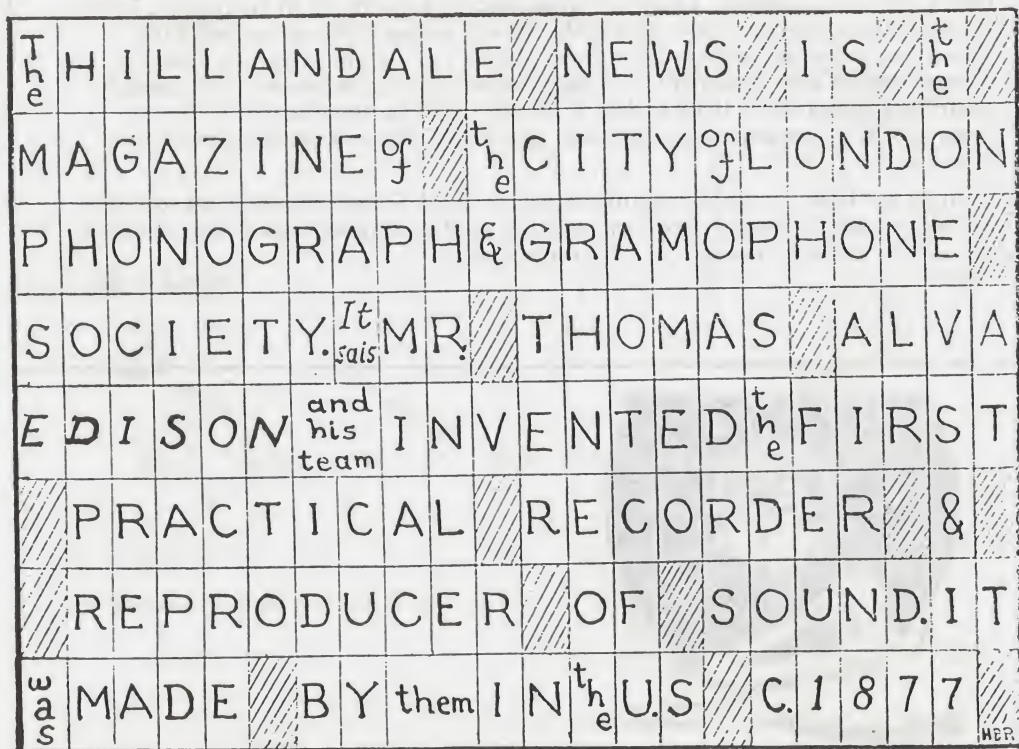
RECORD TIME

A Study in Movement
from Toru Funahashi,
Osaka, Japan.

Solution to The Great EDISON – BELL Crossword published on page 70 of the December 1976 issue of HILLANDALE NEWS.



Solution to The Great EDISON – BELL Gridword published on page 71 of the December 1976 issue of HILLANDALE NEWS.



KING EDWARD VII's RECORDED VOICE -- by F. Andrews.

As the accompanying letter shows, the British Royal Archives have no knowledge of the whereabouts of the recording made by King Edward VII in Copenhagen, on Dr. Paulsen's "Telegrafon", the instrument he invented for recording telephone messages and then relaying them on across further distances. But is there a recording of the King's voice in another place?

From the "Talking Machine News" of February, 1910, I have read the following:—
 "One of the most interesting collections in the British Museum is a set of talking machine records made by notable people. The collection is being augmented week by week, and a hundred years hence the historian will be able to describe how the King's voice and the voices of other members of the Royal Family sounded, as well as those of leading statesmen, scientists, artists, and literateurs. Already there are some 500 records stored away."

ROYAL ARCHIVES



ROUND TOWER

WINDSOR CASTLE

20th October 1976

Dear Mr. Andrews,

Thank you for your letter of 6th October. I very much regret that we have been unable to trace the wire with the recording of King Edward VII's voice, nor have I been able to find any mention in the papers of the recording having been made. However, according to the King's engagement diary, he visited the Telegrafon Fabrick in the Kirkestrade, Copenhagen, on the afternoon of 13th April 1904, when he and Queen Alexandra were staying in Copenhagen, so that it seems likely that the recording was made then. The Queen did not accompany him but possibly she was given the wire later.

I am sorry to have to send you such a disappointing reply but I wonder whether the Danish Company still exists and might have a copy of the recording?

Yours sincerely,

Jane Langton

Registrar.

F. Andrews Esq.,
 46 Aboyne Road,
 London NW.10 OHA.

JOHN McCORMACK ON RECORD — by B.W.

John McCormack made several attempts in the 1930s and 40s to write an autobiography but could never settle and the work was never more than a few notes. After his death his wife, Lily, wrote a biography entitled 'I Hear You Calling Me', and the following account is given, but regrettably there are no details of his reaction to the recording process.

"While waiting to hear from Maestro Sabatini (and also, I have been given to understand for my return from America) John went over to London, where he was engaged to make eight cylinder records for the Edison Company and later ten for the Edison Bell Company. The industry was in its infancy then and for these ten cylinder records he was paid the breath-taking sum of fifty pounds. 'His Master's Voice', then called the Gramophone Company, engaged him to make some for them at the same fee. With a hundred pounds in his pocket and all expenses paid, John felt established as a singer.

In later years he got the greatest fun out of playing his record of 'Killarney', made at this time, for some of his really musical friends, telling them it had been done by an Irish boy who wanted his opinion as to whether he should take up singing as a career. John writes 'without exception, every one of them, including such an excellent critic as my friend, Dr Walter Starkie, said, "Oh Lord, John, don't advise that poor boy to study singing. It is too pathetic for words".' Then John would show them the name on the record and laugh until the tears came.

Later on the account of the Victor contract and an abortive attempt by Edison to record him are given thus.

This story would not be complete without some account of John's records. He writes in his memoirs: "To one of my first opera performances in New York came the head of the Artists Depart-

ment of the Victor Talking Machine Company. He was pleased with my work and asked me to make a test record of an operatic aria and an Irish Ballad. I made 'Tu che a Dio Spiegasti' from Lucia Di Lammermoor, and Killarney. They were excellent and I think are still in the catalogue, after a quarter of a century.

I was offered a contract immediately, but unfortunately I had two more years to sing for the Odeon Company in London. The Victor Company cabled London and asked the Odeon Company how much they would accept to release me. They asked two thousand pounds. Then the Victor Company cabled the Gramophone Company in London asking them to pay half the release — they had a working agreement about their artists. My old friend the Gramophone Company thought that the Victor Company had suddenly gone crazy

Well, perhaps they had. In any case the Victor Company paid two thousand pounds and on February 10th 1910 gave me a contract which did not lapse until February 1938. I received ten thousand dollars in advance of royalties and 10 per cent of the list price of the records.

I have left the name of my very dear friend who signed that contract on behalf of the Victor Company till the end. I want to thank him, not only for that contract but for the great gift of friendship. Bless you, Galvin G. Child."

A year or so after the Victor contract had signed him up, Thomas A. Edison asked Charlie Wagner if he could arrange for a day at the studio. Edison was eager to make tests of John's voice. He thought he would discover something worthwhile because of John's wonderful diction and the unusual timbre of his voice. It was a great disappointment that the Victor Company would not give permission for this.

CORRESPONDENCE

"Musique", [REDACTED] Rochester, N.Y. 14611.

I write concerning your remark made in reference to the cost of our COLORING BOOK OF VINTAGE PHONOGRAPHS. At the time of the original quotation the British Pound was on the downslide and it was thought it might reach as low a value as one American Dollar, which would have made the English price exactly equal to the American price. Since, however, the pound has recovered somewhat we would be pleased to accept any British orders at only one pound sterling. Will you kindly print this letter by way of information to the readers? Cordially, T. FABRIZIO, "MUSIQUE".

CORRESPONDENCE

Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 1RW.

Dear Mr. Brott,

I was interested to see, in 'The Hillandale News' for October, 1976, a letter from Mr. Phil Holson on the subject of Music-Hall Instrumentalists, in which he also mentions the names of a number of vocal artists, among them Ellaline Terriss. This name is familiar to me since it appears on the front covers of some old pieces of sheet music, collected in her early years by my mother, who died recently at the age of 93 years. Apparently, Miss Terriss (whose name is, in all instances, spelled thus, and not with a single final s, as in Mr. Hobson's letter) was the original performer of 'I love you, my Love, I do' (from 'The Circus Girl', 1897); 'The Boy guessed right' (from 'A Runaway Girl', 1898) and 'Navaho' (from 'The Cherry Girl', 1904). All these pieces were among my mother's favourites, and I can remember her playing them often until, some decades ago, advancing age made her unable to use the piano; for nostalgic reasons, I would be very glad to obtain recordings (in any form) of the items I have mentioned or, failing them, any other recordings of Miss Terriss.

Since Mr. Hobson evidently has a special interest in the artists he mentions, I am hoping that he might be able to inform me of any such recordings known to have been issued, and I shall be grateful if you will be kind enough to pass my enquiry on to him.

Yours sincerely,
D. E. Haines.

.....
".....before a fall"

(being a short article that appeared in EDISON DIAMOND POINTS for Sept. 1919).

Mr. W. M. Hinde, until recently a traveller for the Phonograph Company of Kansas City, made 'em all sit up and take notice when he had a New Edison (Diamond Disc Phonograph) delivered by aeroplane from Kansas City to his new "Music Shop" at Sedalia, Missouri. In putting "Music in the Air" he got under the wire miles ahead of his competitors. They don't always have to be shown out in Missouri. Sometimes they show the other fellow how to do it.

We believe this is the first time in history that a phonograph has been delivered by the air route. We regret to announce, however, that it did not prove to be an especially economical way to deliver New Edisons. The plane, after making a safe landing with its precious freight, took Mr. Hinde aboard and he flew over the city showering the astonished spectators with handbills announcing the opening of the Sedalia Music Shop. When he alighted the aeroplane felt so chipper at being relieved of the responsibility of carrying a New Edison and the Sedalia Music Shop's proprietor that it soared skyward, turning a few back airsprings, and flapped its wings like a bird let out of a cage. But then something went wrong, perhaps because "pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall". At any rate the aeroplane fell to the ground and was burned up. The Sedalia papers said that the damage to the plane amounted to \$2,000.

.....

JULIA HEINRICH

The tragic death of Julia Heinrich, the well-known Edison artiste, occurred at Hammond, Louisiana, on September 18th 1919. Miss Heinrich had given a Tone Test Recital at Hammond on the preceding evening and was waiting at the station to go to Baton Rouge when a train, which was pulling into the station, crashed into a baggage truck, which, in turn struck Miss Heinrich and in a few minutes she died.

The many friends of Miss Heinrich were terribly shocked by her tragic death, and the Edison organization feels that in her sad ending it has lost one who was not only a great artiste but a true friend.

(from EDISON DIAMOND POINTS for Oct. 1919)

REPAIR TO A CRACKED DISC

BARRY WILLIAMSON

Surprise, excitement and frustration are not unusual sensations when searching through heaps of old records, but they seldom occur in such quick succession as a few days ago when looking through some 1950s stuff I came across a totally out of place Canadian Victor No. 81031 'Il Sogn' by Caruso. The surface looked excellent but a crack extending from the rim to the edge of the label reluctantly revealed itself. Examination of the crack revealed it to be recent, so this specimen had survived three score and ten years and three thousand miles to be cracked a day or two before I found it. What an unjust world we live in!

I bought the record for a princely ten pence and another one just to hold it together on the journey home where I played it electrically with barely a click.

I put the record away, wondering what to do with it and my problem was solved only a day or two later. Looking through another heap of records I came across a number of those Acetate coated aluminium discs which could be recorded in the best record shops in the forties and fifties. I noted that the aluminium former was quite substantial so I invested in a few of these at tenpence a go. The Acetate coating was easily removed using Acetone as a solvent and I was left with a beautiful shining aluminium disc.

Using a medium sandpaper I roughened one surface of the aluminium disc and then cleaned the side and the reverse of the cracked record with Methylated Spirit to remove any grease. Care

must be taken not to flood the crack in the disc with spirit as it is a solvent and will damage the grooves. The two surfaces were coated with a contact adhesive which was allowed to become tacky in accordance with the instructions.

The problem with contact adhesives is that it leaves no time to adjust, so to ensure that the two discs were going to be concentric I placed the record face down on newspaper on the carpeted floor placing a piece of ¼ inch steel rod in the hole. The aluminium disc was placed, glued side down over the rod, the top of the rod held in place by my chin and the aluminium disc held by my fingertips. The aluminium disc was lowered down the rod until contact was made.

The highly satisfactory result is a disc which plays with only the slightest click and should be strong enough to survive a long time. Be warned, however, when a disc has been cracked for a long time the sides of the crack may distort and the repair may result in part of the record being perfectly playable and the other part having a step which will damage your stylus and cartridge.

'A MUSICAL TRAGEDY'

Philadelphia Ledger Feb. 1913

*Four music SHARPS lived in a FLAT,
though on a modest SCALE;
They had no STAFF of servants that
Might serve to BRACE this tale.
To STAVE off SCORES of creditors
They gave NOTES by the CHOIR;
A MEASURE that was, for a SPACE
In LINE with their desire.*

*Now MAJOR CLEF, a MINOR claim
Submitted and declined
All OVERTURES not in a CHORD
With what was in his mind.
Said he: "This TIME I must have cash!
I REGISTER this vow;
You shall pay TENOR more today;
Yes, you shall DUET now!"
"We cannot BARITONE like that –
'Tis BASS!" the QUARTET cried;
And with our bank account SOLO –
ALTO the debit side!
We'd TRIO gladly if we could,
SOPRANO more insist."
Then with an ACCENT from their hands
They closed the tragic tryst.*

██████████ North Petherton, Somerset, 18 November 1976.

Dear Bill,

I enclose a photocopy of a Caruso letter which has recently come to light (see page 113 - Ed.). It's in the collection of an American who has perhaps the largest and finest private collection of autographs and autographed photos of musical, theatrical, political and military personages in existence – over 15,000 items. He began by writing to Caruso shortly before he left on his fateful voyage to Naples. Caruso responded, and the fourteen year old collector never looked back. The only major hole in his collection is the library one; he never went after novelists, dramatists or poets. But he can produce beautiful signed photos of virtually every singer you've heard of instantly, as well as George Washington, Adolf Hitler, Helen Keller, Puccini, Toscanini, et al. He's particularly strong on Nordica, John Wilkes Booth (did Lincoln in) and Jenny Lind.*

Of course you're invited to reproduce the letter in the "News" and as much of this letter as may be useful. It's a good letter, I think, reflecting C's generous character, and without the errors in spelling which so many writers dote on with amused condescension.

Regards,

M. L. Gardner.

* Anything to do with J.W.B. or J.L. is hotly collected in the States!

PAPER AND THINGS

by George Frow

Christmas brought me several greetings cards from members, their ingenuity matched by the amount of effort spent on them, and may I extend thanks to these kind people. I do not keep a membership list, and have not been able to reciprocate, but not being endowed with much originality my cards are only of the commercial sort, candles, baubles, robins and so forth and bought in bulk.

Like that other epic, 'Gone With The Wind', this column has a habit of appearing in two parts; twice of late this has happened, and has come about by my sending typescript through in instalments as material has come to notice, in an effort to keep it as up-to-date as possible.

My first query comes from Frank Andrews who asks if any member has a cylinder machine with the name **Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation Ltd.** on it. If you have and it bears these exact words please write to him at ██████████ London, N.W.10. Having written these words and having regarded my own without success, I had an afterthought and looked at my electric Commercial Phonograph, and it bears these very words, the address being given as Edison House, Northumberland Avenue, London, W.C. What is more there is a hyphen between Edison and Bell.

The Recorded Vocal Art Society has again sent in its programme for the year and it can again and always be commended to anyone who enjoys serious song on records of all speeds and shapes. Our former Treasurer, Gordon Bromly, is its Chairman, and as well as a programme presentation by a distinguished membership, guests from the opera and concert world contribute programmes. The

(Continued on page 114)

New York March 12th 1919

W. H. Edwards Esq.

My Dear Collector

I am very proud to send
you my check for income tax.

I am glad to do my
part in contributing towards
paying the expenses of the War

America has done much for
me and happy am I to
reciprocate

Sincerely yours
Eugene Barnes

Society meets twice a month in Central London and membership at £1-50 p.a. is modest enough these days. Your enquiries will be dealt with by Mrs. D. Bromly, [REDACTED] West Wickham, BR4 0HB.

In the October issue I appealed for members who wanted to form local branches of the Society to write to me and I would try to do what I could to encourage them to get a start by having a list of members in their area sent to them. This involves our Secretary, John McKeown, of course, but like Charity he suffereth long and is kind; as a result I hear of a couple more branches struggling into life – and it is a struggle to get anything of this sort off to a start, to get an agreeable meeting place and a link up between members. To help, I would always be glad to receive reports and plans from Branch Secretaries and will do my best to see they get into HILLANDALE in some form or other, perhaps setting up a special corner for the purpose, or by putting out an extra duplicated sheet. As I say in nearly every issue, we have found in the South East that the branch formed there has brought us into the ken of several members who could not or would not make the monthly trip up to the 'John Snow'. It would be a great pleasure in the next issue to be able to give mention to newly-formed Branches, and I will give them all possible publicity until one day perhaps someone else would like to take the job over as Branch Secretary. How about it?

.....
Sydney H. Carter, [REDACTED] Worthing, Sussex, has widened his range of half-nuts for Edison Phonographs as follows: GEM, FIRESIDE, STANDARD (R/H and L/H) at £1 each, and HOME and TRIUMPH at £1-20 each, with matched pairs for TRIUMPH and similar machines also available.

.....
A complete set of HILLANDALE NEWS is quite a history in itself now, and all efforts are going ahead this year to have these all available for this Centenary Year. A binding service is now offered by Ian Cozens, [REDACTED] Halifax, HX6 3QY, England at £3-50 per volume, plus spine blocking at 50p extra, and the one hundred issues we shall shortly achieve would stand handsomely in grey clothboard on any bookshelf.

.....
Several issues ago I drew attention to a Stationery Office publication called **Thomas Edison – Professional Inventor** by Thomas P. Hughes. This costs £1 from The Science Museum, London, S.W.10, or any Government bookshop. If you live in the United States from Pendragon House inc., 220 University Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94301. Having had a chance to look at it, I must say I enjoyed it; it makes no pretensions of being anything of a biography, but briefly covers Edison's main inventions in 47 pages with a few illustrations we have seen before, and from an author writing from the University of Pennsylvania gives Edison's London projects more coverage than before.

.....
A Collector's Guide to the Columbia Spring Wound Cylinder Graphophone, 1894-1910 by Howard Hazelcorn emanates from the A.P.M. Press, Allen Koenigsberg, [REDACTED] Brooklyn, New York 11226 – cost \$6-50 – gives us 36 pages of Graphophone information that is long overdue. This is the first serious attempt to list, describe and partially illustrate these machines, although I have relied on a wonderful private listing compiled the real hard way by V.K. Chew many years ago. At the same time this Guide must in its way have been an uphill task based on catalogues and "Who's got what?" research; one feels that perhaps this is a platform for something larger to come and is recommended to all interested in these machines. The illustrations

all appear to be of extant well-cared-for machines and not taken from catalogues, and it has an illustrated page of reproducers. There is also a rarity scale which is most useful to know about, but I question the wisdom of publishing it in these commercial times when there are plenty of opportunists ready to wave it in front of a prospective buyer. The booklet is finished to the usual high Koenigsberg standard.

.....

And to round off with an item that includes not only a spot of nourishment to start the day on, but a model gramophone thrown in, I am obliged for a nod from our Treasurer, Barry Williamson. United Kingdom members might like to know that the cereal 'Ready-Brek' is offering a cut-out and stick-together Trade Mark Gramophone on the back of the large size packet. The resulting model is quite small, about the size of the novelty shop gramophones, but the idea might help to while away an hour or so with the thought of something for breakfast at the end. Anyhow Barry Williamson's family look well on it in spite of protest that there are limits to how far one can go for The Hobby. And a very good breakfast to you all!

.....

EDISON BELL ERA



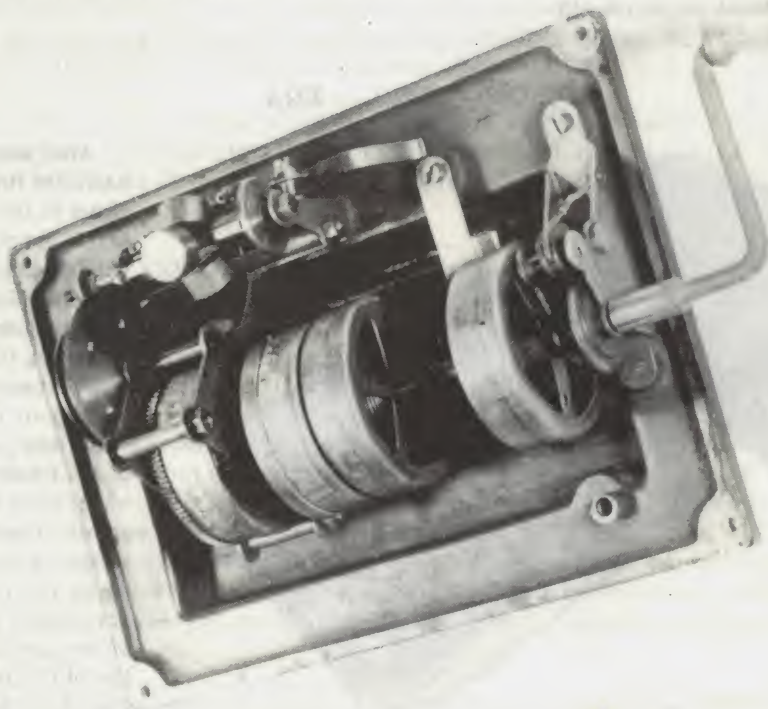
After losing their exclusive British rights to the Edison and Graphophone patents around 1902, Edison Bell started making their own machines; the most frequent models to turn up are the Standard (very similar to the Edison model of the same name) and the Gem (a small version of the Standard). Later on they developed a series of new models, the Imp, Elf, Era and Don. Like the 'Lyr-ic' reproducer Graphophones, these

had the reproducer (still of Edison Model C pattern) mounted in a trunnion extending downwards to the feedscrew in front of the mandrel. The feedscrew is actually under the bedplate, driven directly from the motor, and, as on the earlier Edison Bell models, instead of a feed-nut there is a knife-edge wheel engaging the thread. The Imp and Elf were small, Gem-size models, the Era and Don of Standard size. The photographs show a general view of the top of the machine, and also a

view of the motor of the Era, which has four 5/8-inch springs. An interesting feature is the silent ratchet, which comprises a large knife-edge wheel on the winding arbor and an eccentric V-grooved fibre wheel held against the knife-edge by a light spring. When the arbor is turning clockwise (i.e. during winding), the friction tends to push the fibre eccentric away from the knife-edge, but as soon as the handle is released, the force of the mainsprings turns the arbor anti-clockwise, turning the eccentric against the knife-edge so that the latter is jammed in position.

This machine, which dates from around 1908, is not often found. Even rarer would be the four-minute version (available as a four-minute only or combination type), incorporating the Edison Bell Crystal reproducer, for playing the equally scarce Crystal cylinders.

(Included in Christie's South Kensington sale on March 16, 1977).



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